

**GRAIN VALLEY HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT-ATHLETE NAMED
GATORADE MISSOURI GIRLS BASKETBALL PLAYER OF THE YEAR**

CHICAGO (March 8, 2023) — In its 38th year of honoring the nation's best high school athletes, Gatorade today announced **Grace Slaughter** of **Grain Valley High School** is the **2022-23 Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Player of the Year**. Slaughter is the first Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Player of the Year to be chosen from Grain Valley High School.

The award, which recognizes not only outstanding athletic excellence, but also high standards of academic achievement and exemplary character demonstrated on and off the court, distinguishes Slaughter as Missouri's best high school girls basketball player. Slaughter joins an elite alumni association of state award-winners in 12 sports, including Kiki Rice (2021-22, Sidwell Friends School, Washington, D.C.), Paige Bueckers (2019-20, Hopkins High School, Minn.), Nneka Ogwumike (2007-08, CyFair High School, Texas), and Candace Parker (2003-04 & 2002-03, Naperville Central High School, Ill.).

At the time of her selection, the 6-foot-2 senior wing had led the Eagles to a 22-4 record and a berth in the Class 6, District 7 Tournament semifinals. Slaughter averaged 27.9 points, 6.0 rebounds, 1.9 steals and 1.3 assists per game through 26 games. A two-time Class 6 First Team All-State selection, she won a gold medal with the Team USA Under-16 National Team at the FIBA Americas championships in 2021. She entered the district semifinals with 2,521 points in her prep basketball career.

A member of her local chapter of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Slaughter has volunteered locally as a youth basketball coach. "Grace is a phenomenal player," said Jim Underwood, head coach of Belton High School. "GV shares the ball better than any team in the area and that speaks well to her leadership. She lifts that program with her effort and attitude."

Slaughter has maintained a weighted 4.42 GPA in the classroom. She has signed a national letter of intent to play basketball on scholarship at the University of Missouri this fall.

The [Gatorade Player of the Year](#) program annually recognizes one winner in the District of Columbia and each of the 50 states that sanction high school football, girls volleyball, boys and girls cross country, boys and girls basketball, boys and girls soccer, baseball, softball, and boys and girls track & field, and awards one National Player of the Year in each sport. The selection process is administered by the Gatorade Player of the Year Selection Committee, which leverages experts including coaches, scouts, media and others as sources to help evaluate and determine the state winners in each sport.

Slaughter joins recent Gatorade Missouri Girls Basketball Players of the Year Bella Fontleroy (2021-22, Kickapoo High School), Natalie Potts (2020-21, Incarnate Word Academy), Katie Scott (2019-20, Carl Junction High School), and Hayley Frank (2018-19, Strafford High School), among the state's list of former award winners.

Being a Gatorade Player of the Year means paying it forward for the next generation. Through Gatorade's Play it Forward initiative, every Player of the Year receives a grant to give to one of Gatorade's social impact partners, supporting Gatorade's ambition to fuel the future of sport. To date, Gatorade Player of the Year winners' grants have totaled more than \$3.5 million across more than 1,300 organizations.

For nearly 40 years, Gatorade has honored high school athletes at the top of their game as teammates, supporting their communities and achieving academic success. From CEOs and coaches to star athletes and community leaders, Gatorade Player of the Year winners showcase the power of sport.

To learn more about the Gatorade Player of the Year program, check out past winners or to nominate student-athletes, visit playeroftheyear.gatorade.com or follow us on social media on Facebook at facebook.com/GatoradePOY, Instagram at instagram.com/Gatorade and Twitter at twitter.com/Gatorade.

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